

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK

YELLOWSTONE PARK, WYO.

DE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

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MONTHLY REPORT

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February, 1918.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK

YELLOWSTONE PARK, WYO.

ICE OF SUPERVISOR

Superintendent.

Apr 10
March 9th

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The Director,
National Park Service,
Washington, D. C.

Sir:

I have the honor to submit my report of conditions in the park for the month of February, 1918.

Manual
GENERAL STATEMENT.

The Yellowstone National Park was set aside by Act of Congress March 1, 1872, (Secs. 2474 and 2475, R. S., 17 Stat., 32) as a pleasuring-ground for the benefit and enjoyment of the people, and placed under the exclusive control of the Secretary of the Interior, who was authorized to make such rules and regulations as he deems necessary for the care and management of the park. It is situated principally in northwestern Wyoming, but laps over a little more than two miles into Montana on the north, and almost two miles into Montana and Idaho on the west. Its dimensions are about 62 miles north and south, and about 54 miles east and west, giving an area of about 3,348 square miles, or 2,142,720 acres. Its altitude is 6,000 to 11,000 feet.

The park was governed by civilian superintendents, assisted by a few scouts, from the time it was set aside until August 10, 1886, when, under authority contained in the Sundry Civil Bill approved March 3, 1883, at the request of the Secretary of the Interior the Secretary of War detailed troops of United States Cavalry to protect the park, the commanding officer acting as park superintendent under the direct orders of the Secretary of the Interior. On October 16, 1916, by mutual agreement of the heads of the two Departments, the troops were withdrawn from the park, and a civilian supervisor, with a corps of 25 rangers for patrol and protection work, and a few civilian employees necessary for other duties, were appointed by the Secretary of the Interior to replace them. The Sundry Civil Bill, approved June 12, 1917, (Public No. 21, 65th Congress) contained a clause which made it necessary for the troops to be returned to the park for the purpose of patrolling it, and they were returned on June

Superintendent
26, 1917, relieving the park ~~supervisor~~ of so much of the duties as pertained to "protection."

✓ The maintenance and construction of roads, bridges and improvements in Yellowstone Park, is carried on by special appropriation under the War Department, the work being locally in charge of an officer of the U. S. Engineer Department known as the District Engineer Officer, who reports directly to the Chief of Engineers, although his orders direct him to report to the Park Superintendent for duty. 278.8 miles of main road and 24.75 miles of secondary road are located in the park, and 106.5 miles of main road is maintained by the same department in the forest reserves adjoining the park on the south and east. Major George E. Verrill, Engineers, U. S. Reserves, is at the present time in charge of improvement work in the park, as District Engineer. A copy of his report for the month of February will be transmitted as soon as received. *is appended hereto*

✓ The local office of the U. S. Weather Bureau, Department of Agriculture, is in charge of Mr. G. E. Lawton, Observer.

✓ Park Headquarters for all departments and most of the concessioners, is located at Mammoth Hot Springs. A telephone system connects Headquarters with the sub-stations. A hydro-electric power plant furnishes the light for the buildings and grounds at Headquarters. Water, electric current, and telephone service are furnished other departments of the government in the park, by the National Park Service, without charge. During February the hydro-electric power plant was run daily from 4:00 P. M. until 8:00 A. M., and was continued during the day when any necessity existed.

✓ Funds for purposes of administration of the park, and for the care and maintenance of buffalo and other animals, are obtained from special appropriations by Congress, and from revenues derived from various sources in the park.

CONDITIONS FOR THE MONTH OF FEBRUARY.

✓ The monthly mean temperature was 18.2 degrees, which was 1.4 degrees colder than normal. The lowest temperature recorded was 17 degrees below zero, on the 19th. The precipitation was 2.03 inches, -.19 inches more than normal, almost entirely in the form of snow, the total snowfall recorded being 22.9 inches. At the end of February there were 17 inches of snow on the ground at Mammoth. There were 23 inches on the same date in the year 1917. The snow was somewhat drifted, and sleighing between Mammoth and Gardiner was good only a

portion of the month. On February 1st the train from Livingston failed to reach Gardiner on account of large drift. The conditions for game animals were fairly good.

EMPLOYEES.

A total of 21 permanent and 2 temporary employees were carried on the pay roll during the month of February, and one temporary employee from the 19th to the 28th, and two from the 27th to the 28th, namely: One chief clerk, (Acting Superintendent) two clerks, one chief scout, nine scouts, one buffalo keeper, one assistant buffalo keeper, two telephone switchboard operators, one lineman, one electrician, one assistant electrician, one laborer, one temporary plumber, one temporary lineman, two temporary laborers, and one temporary assistant electrician.

The employment of the hunter with his trained dogs for exterminating mountain lions, was discontinued at the end of January.

Distribution: Chief Scout McBride continued the feeding of elk, deer, antelope and mountain sheep, between Mammoth Hot Springs and Gardiner, and in the vicinity of these points, and was assisted in this work by Scouts Trischman, Lawson, Pound, Dewing and Smith. Scout Dewing also spent a part of his time hunting coyotes and wolves along the north line, and since the 27th Scout Smith has been detailed to assist the Forest Rangers from Absaroka National Forest in protecting the elk that have left the park down the Yellowstone Valley from poachers and tooth hunters. About 194 tons of hay were fed to the game animals during the month. About 11 tons remained for March, and bids have been opened for a small additional supply if needed. Scouts Little and Brooks made patrols to Crevice Mountain and Slough Creek on snowshoes, patrolled in the vicinity of Mammoth Hot Springs, and Little made one trip down the Yellowstone Valley to learn of condition of elk that have left the park. He and Scout Brooks also assisted J. E. Haynes in procuring some good moving pictures of game.

Scout Anderson patrolled, mounted, between Gardiner and the mouth of Buffalo Fork, along the north line, both inside and outside of the park. He reports 14 inches of snow along the bed of Yellowstone River, and from that to 3½ and 4 feet high up on the mountain sides. He saw 5,000 to 6,000 elk in all in that district, north of the Yellowstone River, all in fair condition, except that some of the calves and a few crippled elk that are getting weak. That feed seems to be plentiful under the snow, but they must of course paw for it. He saw 131 blacktailed deer, 49 head of mountain sheep, and 4 moose. He killed 1 mountain lion, 1 bobcat, 4 coyotes, and an airedale dog that

has been running wild in that part of the park and adjoining country for several years. Scout Lacombe remained on duty at Tower Falls Station during the month, and patrolled that district frequently. He reports 22 inches of snow at the station. Also about 2,000 elk, 27 mountain sheep and 7 deer, in good condition except the elk calves, which are showing some signs of weakness. He found 8 dead ones, and 5 dead cow elk that were killed by wolves, of which he says there is a pack of about 16 ranging between Specimen Ridge and Slough Creek. He killed 3 coyotes during the month. The buffalo keeper and his assistant were on duty at the Buffalo Farm on Lamar River. Other employees were on duty at Headquarters, operating and maintaining telephone lines, hydro-electric power plant, buildings, etc., and caring for the horses belonging to the Department, which are being fed hay.

Leaves of absence: Only one employee was on regular annual leave during the month, namely: Chief Clerk Chester A. Lindsley, from noon, 21st to noon, 25th; 2 days.

Vacancies: At the close of February 28th there were the following vacancies: 1 assistant electrician at \$1200 per annum; (vacancy since January 8th) 1 lineman at \$900 per annum; and 1 plumber at \$1200 per annum.

During the month employees of this Department purchased a total of \$501.48 worth of War Saving and Thrift Stamps.

ANIMALS. DOMESTIC.

Such driving, saddle and pack animals as were needed for regular work and feeding game were kept up and fed hay and grain. Surplus horses were kept on alfalfa hay at Headquarters.

FOREST FIRES.

No forest fires occurred during the month.

FISHING.

There was no fishing during the month, except a little in Gardiner River, and in Yellowstone River near the mouth of the Gardiner.

IMPROVEMENTS.

The weather was not suitable for making extensive outside improvements. Nothing was done in this line except for slight repairs to tools and machinery by regular employees, where specially needed. One of the ice houses was filled by employees of this Department and the Engineer Department, working together; completed filling on the 7th.

The Yellowstone Park Transportation Company continued the employment of a small number of men at the Mammoth garage, including one special automobile mechanic from the factories of the White Company. The wheels from many of the large cars used in handling passenger traffic in the park, were taken off and sent to the factory for rebuilding, to accommodate a new heavy pneumatic cord tire that the company expects to use next season to replace the lighter fabric tires which gave them so much trouble last season.

The U. S. Engineer Department finished mining sufficient coal in the park to cover its needs, and for this Department, for several months, and closed down the mine for the time being. Copy of the monthly report of the District Engineer will be transmitted as soon as received.

MONIES TRANSMITTED.

During February the following-described monies were transmitted to the National Park Service from this office, namely:

Feb. 7th: for electric current sold from hydro-electric power plant for the month of December.....	\$ 57.07
Feb. 12th: received from Pryor & Trischman, on account of rental of land at Mammoth Hot Springs for store privileges, for one year in advance.....	\$ 50.00
Feb. 26th: for electric current sold during January.....	\$ 57.65
Total.....	\$164.72

NATURAL PHENOMENA.

No changes in the natural phenomena of the park were recorded for the month of February.

VISITORS.

Ten tourists were registered at the northern, or Gardiner, entrance during the month of February, for trips to Mammoth only.

Special Visitors to Mammoth Hot Springs were recorded as follows:

Mr. J. E. Haynes, from St. Paul, Minn., who holds a photographic concession in the park, from February 4th to 12th, for the purpose of taking moving pictures of the wild animals, including methods of handling and feeding them in winter. Every assistance practicable was given Mr. Haynes in this work, and he is of the opinion that he got excellent results.

Mr. J. G. Sill, of Portland, Oregon, February 13th to 19th, for the purpose of taking moving pictures of wild game.

Births: A baby girl was born to Mr. and Mrs. William Wiggins, of the Fort Yellowstone garrison, formerly plumber for this Department, on February 18th.

WILD ANIMALS.

All wild animals seen were reported to be in excellent condition, except that in a few cases some of the calf elk were showing signs of weakness, but a few deaths must be expected among them annually, regardless of how well they are taken care of or how easy the winter. About 3,500 elk, 13 mountain sheep, 350 antelope, and more than a hundred deer, were fed hay during the month, daily, requiring 194 tons of hay and the labor of five men and three teams constantly. Of course the elk that are being fed are but a small part of the total herd, but I believe this winter's feeding will be of value as an experiment to determine whether it is advisable to adopt a general feeding policy for the elk or not. Reports of the Forest Rangers who are engaged in protecting the elk outside of the park indicate that there are probably between 3,000 and 4,000 outside of the park, extending down the Yellowstone Valley for several miles. One or two cases of poaching for meat have been apprehended, and a few signs of others have been found, outside of the park. The Forest Service requested assistance, and I now have one scout working with their rangers in the vicinity of Cedar Creek and Dome Mountain, constantly, and Scout Anderson works both inside and outside of the park, with one of the Forest Rangers, from Gardiner east to Buffalo Fork and Slough Creek.

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Most of the parties who have the name of being poachers are either working steadily at legitimate labor, or have left the country, and I do not anticipate any large amount of poaching. The poachers arrested by the Forest Rangers were turned over to the State Game Wardens, who prosecuted them with good results.

Dead animals found in the park and reported for the month of February were: ELK: one female calf died of fright in crate intended for shipment to Crookston, Minnesota; 1 calf killed in capturing for Idaho; two calves with broken legs found dead near Gardiner; one calf dead along bank of Gardiner River, and one calf found dead near the coal mine on Mt. Everts, cause unknown. Scout Lacombe reported 8 dead calves, and five dead cows that were killed by wolves, in the Tower Falls district. Total dead elk reported, 19. One blacktail deer was found dead in the corral at the Engineer Department's barns at Mammoth, and reported by the barnman.

The grazing conditions for the elk outside of the zone where they are fed are reported to be in fair condition, with a fair amount of forage which can be reached by pawing through the snow. The number of animals seen during the month was practically the same as for the previous month. A part of the Gardiner Canyon band of mountain sheep moved over to Red Mountain, back of Mt. Everts, and all of the sheep seemed to find all the feed they wanted without coming to the hay often, though they came down to Gardiner River nearly every evening. The prospects of getting them all together for dipping does not seem very good.

During the month elk were shipped as follows:

February 2: 10 bulls, 2-3 years old, and 40 cows, same age, to Idaho, by freight in two cars, allotment of January 4, 1918. State Game Warden Jones and one deputy came for them. They were captured by C. B. Scott, and one calf was killed in catching; it was found in the corral with leg broken, and died shortly after.

February 18: Two 2-year-olds, 1 male and 1 female, to Aurora, Illinois; authority dated December 20, 1917.

February 19: One 5-year-old male to Fort Worth, Texas; authority dated January 8, 1918.

✓ February 21: Two calves, 1 male and 1 female, to Crookston, Minnesota; authority dated January 7, 1918. (One female elk died of fright after being placed in the crate.)

✓ Buffalo: The tame herd of buffalo is in good condition. The robe and skeleton of the 7-year-old bull killed January 29th has been shipped to Hastings College, as a specimen, by freight, charges collect.

✓ Coyotes: Twenty coyotes were killed during the month of February.

✓ Wolves: A pack of about 16 is reported on Specimen Ridge, but none were killed during the month.

✓ Mountain lions: One mountain lion was killed during the month by Scout Anderson. Mr. Elkins worked but a few days during the month, and did not catch any lions.

✓ I am informed by the State Game Warden for Montana, that there were killed during 1917, 848 coyotes in Gallatin County; 1533 in Park and Sweetgrass Counties; and 301 in Carbon County. He did not have the data for Madison County. These figures indicate to me that there are a much larger number of predatory animals in the counties adjoining the park than we have in the park itself, doubtless due to the fact that domestic stock are a much easier prey to their ravages than are the wild animals.

PROTECTION AND CARE OF GAME.

✓ No cases of poaching were reported during the month of February.

✓ No special improvement in the work of protection, which is intrusted to the troops, is apparent. In the past they do nothing except what is absolutely necessary, and the neglect of proper care of buildings and other property is apparent.

ARRESTS AND VIOLATIONS OF THE LAW.

✓ No violations of law in the park were reported, and no arrests were made during February. A few cases of poaching in Montana, outside of the park, have been reported, and one or two arrests have been made by the Forest Rangers, and the parties turned over to the State for prosecution.

PROPOSED WORK.

✓ Completion of the pictorial and locational index of structures and improvements in the park, as suggested in your letter of June 15, 1917.

✓ Care and feeding of wild animals, and destruction of carnivorous animals.

✓ Repair and maintenance of telephone lines, water system, and hydro-electric power plant.

✓ Filing and transferring correspondence and other records of the office, work that has fallen behind during the summer season, and preparations for renewal of work on trails, telephone lines, and meadows, as soon as spring opens up.

✓ Enclosed herewith for your information is copy of a circular issued on February 28th, relative to saving of articles ordinarily wasted, by employees of this office. Also a copy of list of different makes of automobiles that went through the Yellowstone Park during the 1917 season.

Very respectfully,

CHESTER A. LINDSLEY

Acting Superintendent.

Inclosures: